

Message Text

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SUBJECT: US-EC CULTURAL INITIATIVE

REF: STATE 246586; BONN 18016

1. OUR CONJECTURE IS THAT THE GERMAN SIDE AT THE BILATERAL GERMAN-AMERICAN CULTURAL TALKS JANUARY 10-11 WOULD RECEIVE AND DISCUSS THE EC APPROACH PROPOSED IN REFTTEL WITH AN OPEN MIND, MIGHT EVEN SUPPORT IT (OR AN APPROACH TO THE COUNCIL FOR CULTURAL COOPERATION OF THE EUROPEAN COUNCIL) AS LONG AS IT DOES NOT INTERFERE WITH A CONTINUATION OF THE ANNUAL GERMAN-AMERICAN CULTURAL TALKS DECIDED ON LAST YEAR.

2. FYI, IN DISCUSSING THE JANUARY 10-11 AGENDA WITH THE FONOFF, WE LEARNED THAT IT IS TODAY CONSIDERABLY LESS ENTHUSIASTIC ABOUT SETTING UP ADDITIONAL BILATERAL "PERMANENT MIXED CULTURAL COMMISSIONS" (WHICH EXIST BETWEEN THE FRG AND AT LEAST 21 NATIONS) AS IT WAS SEVERAL YEARS AGO SINCE IT HAS COME TO REALIZE THAT THE REWARDS DERIVING FROM THE LARGE AND LONG MIXED COMMISSION MEETINGS ARE NOT COMMENSURATE TO THE AMOUNT OF TIME, MONEY AND EFFORT EXPENDED ON THEM. IT CONSIDERS AT THIS STAGE THE EXISTING US-FRG PATTERN OF ANNUAL CULTURAL TALKS, WHICH ARE LESS FORMAL AND FORMIDABLE THAN THE MIXED COMMISSION MEETINGS, AS THE IDEAL WAY OF MAINTAINING A CONSTRUCTIVE DIALOGUE

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BETWEEN THE FRG AND A PARTNER OPEN-SOCIETY NATION AND FOR FOCUSING ON MUTUAL PROBLEMS AND CHALLENGES. IT HAS LET US KNOW THAT IT IS PROPOSING THIS PATTERN OF CULTURAL RELATIONS TO AT LEAST TWO OTHER NATIONS, INCLUDING CANADA, WITH WHICH CULTURAL AGREEMENTS ARE PRESENTLY BEING NEGOTIATED. HOWEVER, REALIZING THAT THE CULCON CONCEPT DISCUSSED WITH HARPPRECHT AND FORSTER DIFFERS IN SOME RESPECTS FROM ITS MIXED COMMISSIONS, IT RETAINS A VERY OPEN MIND ON THE CONCEPT AND IS EAGER TO DISCUSS IT ON JANUARY 10 AND 11 AND BE BRIEFED ON US EXPERIENCES WITH THE US-JAPAN CULCON AND ITS EFFECTS ON US-JAPANESE CULTURAL RELATIONS.

3. NEVERTHELESS, IF IN THE DISCUSSION THE GERMAN DELEGATION SUPPORTS THE IDEA OF EXPLORING THE US-EC (OR US-CCC) APPROACH, IT MAY IN DOING SO BE IN PART MOTIVATED BY A DESIRE NOT TO GET INVOLVED AT THIS TIME IN A US-FRG CULCON. WE ARE QUITE SURE IT WOULD AT THIS POINT BE UNWILLING TO GIVE UP THE IDEA OF ANNUAL US-FRG CULTURAL TALKS.
HILLENBRAND

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